



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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*Office of the United States Attorney  
District of Arizona*

For Information Contact Public Affairs  
WYN HORNBuckle  
Telephone: (602) 514-7625  
Cell: (602) 525-2681

## **DARRYL JAMES, JR. TRIAL BEGINS TODAY IN PRESCOTT**

PRESCOTT - Opening statements and testimony began Wednesday in federal district court in the trial of Darryl Lee James, Jr., 21, who faces murder, robbery, and sexual assault charges in connection with a series of crimes that occurred on the Navajo Indian Reservation in September 2002.

James is charged with First Degree Murder and Felony Murder-Robbery in the September 23, 2002 death of Juanita Begay, then 47, on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Indian Country. He is accused of killing Juanita Begay in the process of attempting to steal her pickup truck among other items. James is also charged with two counts of Aggravated Sexual Abuse in connection with the sexual assault of two girls that same day, one of them under the age of 12. He is further charged with assaulting an adult male, Henry Wilson Begay. He faces several other federal firearms charges in connection with these crimes.

A conviction for first degree murder carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. In determining an actual sentence, the District Court Judge will consult U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The trial is expected to last approximately three weeks. The prosecution of the case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Vincent Q. Kirby. The investigation leading to the indictment was conducted by the FBI and the Navajo Department of Public Safety.

**\*\*Media Note:** Cameras of all types are not allowed in the federal court house during the proceedings.\*\*

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-00900-MHM-1  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-184(James)

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